

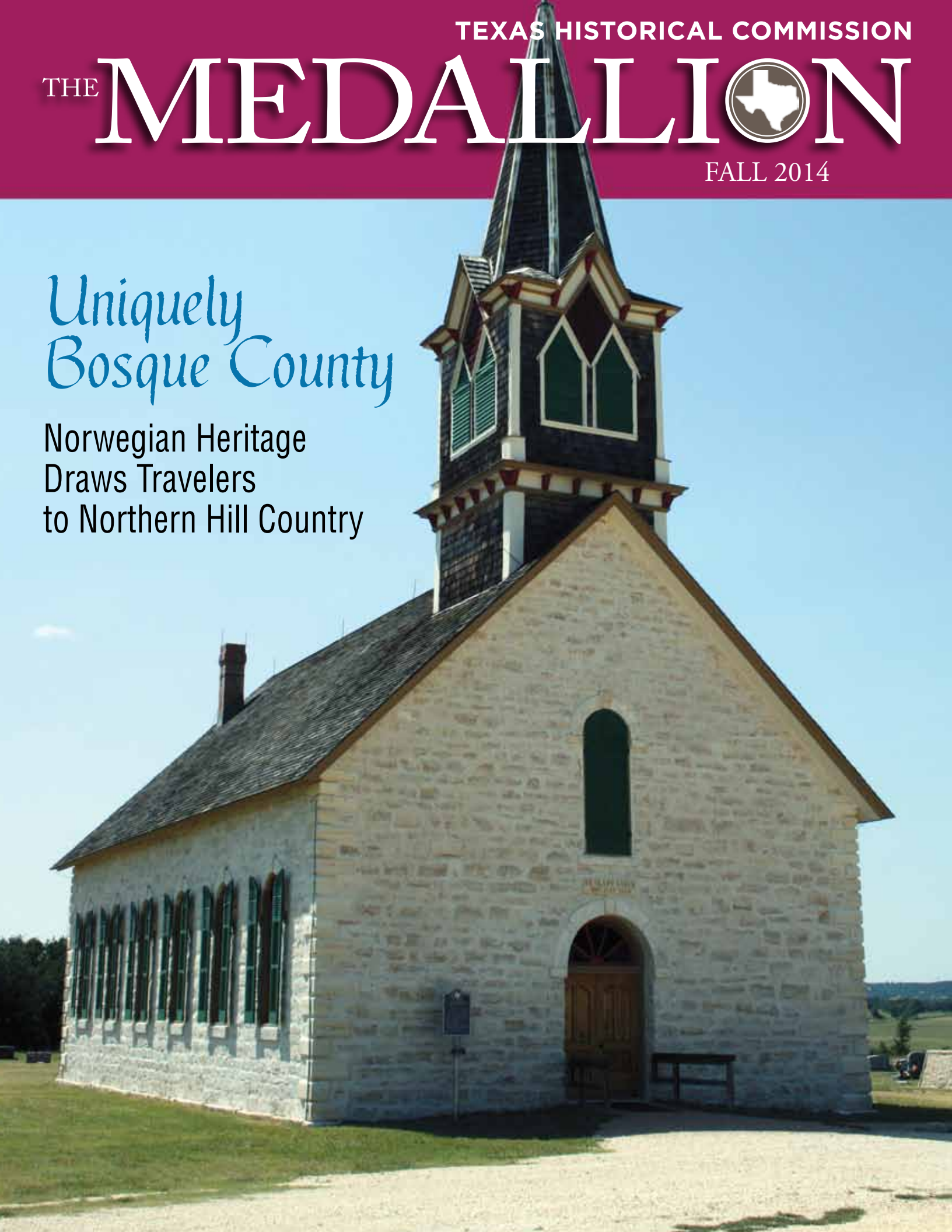
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

THE MEDALLION

FALL 2014

Uniquely Bosque County

Norwegian Heritage
Draws Travelers
to Northern Hill Country





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The 1886 Norwegian Rock Church in
Bosque County. Photo by Andy Rhodes.

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BRINGING THE BELLE TO THE BULLOCK

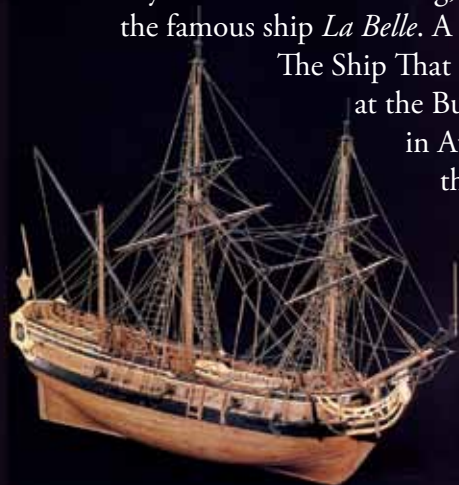
After nearly two decades of waiting, the public will finally be able to view
the famous ship *La Belle*. A groundbreaking exhibit, "*La Belle:*

The Ship That Changed History," opens October 25

at the Bullock Texas State History Museum

in Austin. The exhibit will lead viewers
through the captivating story of LaSalle
and his crew's 1684–86 voyage from
France to Matagorda Bay. It will
showcase artifacts from the ship and,
more significantly, its in-progress
reassembly by archeologists.

Please see article on page 5.



Juneteenth Journey

Historical Groups Work Together to Develop THC Marker

By Rob Hodges
THC Social Media Coordinator

On a sweltering Saturday in late June, a crowd of about 500 packed under a large tent in Galveston hung on to every word of Rev. Virgil Wood. Although the 83-year-old was not officially on the program for the Juneteenth marker dedication, he capped off the revival-like atmosphere with a rousing account of an interview he conducted when he was 17 with a former slave who remembered hearing the news of emancipation first-hand from Union soldiers. In a ceremony full of moving speeches about the history of slavery and emancipation in Texas, Wood's story provided a personal connection to that not-so-distant past.

Other speakers at the marker dedication on June 21 included Texas Historical Commission (THC) Chairman Matthew Kreisle; THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe; State Sen. Larry Taylor (R-Friendswood); U.S. Rep. Randy Weber (R-Texas); Hank Thierry, chairman of the Galveston Historical Foundation's (GHF) African American Heritage Committee; former GHF President Debbie Morris; and Sam Collins III, chair of the State Board of Review, who yielded most of his time to allow Wood to speak.

Collins' act of sharing the spotlight befits his key role in the placement of the marker. He coordinated the project, working with numerous parties including the THC, GHF, Galveston County Historical Commission (CHC), and numerous private donors.

The idea began in 2010, when THC Military Historian William McWhorter was considering ways to commemorate



Sam Collins (holding hat) helped organize and dedicate Galveston's Juneteenth historical marker.

the Civil War's sesquicentennial and realized there was no marker honoring Juneteenth in Galveston, the site where Texas slaves first learned of their emancipation following the Civil War. His first thought was to apply for a THC-funded Undertold Marker, but he had to wait until the next application period. In December 2011, he posted a notice on the THC website about potentially placing a Juneteenth marker in Galveston to commemorate the sesquicentennial. GHF Executive Director Dwayne Jones saw the webpage and contacted the THC about the marker project and an unrelated series of statewide grant-funded sesquicentennial workshops. One was taking place in Galveston in November 2012, so McWhorter invited Collins to speak about Juneteenth.

"Sam came to the workshop and gave an eloquent synopsis of what Juneteenth means to the people of Galveston and around the world," McWhorter recalls. "Then, he surprised everyone and said we wouldn't have to

apply for an Undertold Marker application—he had raised the money to pay for it."

On the spot, the GHF agreed to be the sponsor, and the Galveston CHC agreed to submit it. Collins requested that the marker be placed in June 2014 to kick off a year of celebration leading to the 150th anniversary in 2015. The GHF worked with McWhorter to determine the marker location, set a timeline and—between November 2013 and the dedication date of June 21, 2014—made sure the inscription was completed, proofread, submitted by the

CHC, sent to the foundry, and delivered to the site on time. The GHF's African American Heritage Committee raised \$5,000 to fund the dedication ceremony and a free public concert.

The marker dedication and unveiling was a joyous occasion that took place on the southwest corner of 22nd Street and the Strand in downtown Galveston, the former site of the Union Army headquarters where General Order No. 3 was issued, announcing the emancipation of slaves.

"I think people need to realize Juneteenth celebrates freedom, and freedom is something we all value," says Collins. "Juneteenth is not just an African American holiday, but a day that celebrates the evolution of our country to a more perfect union. The events that happened on June 19, 1865, in Galveston made us a better country. We encourage people to celebrate Juneteenth all over the state and world, but if possible, join us on Galveston Island on June 19, 2015." ★

Vital: Discovery

Shipwrecks Raise Awareness During Texas Archeology Month

By Amy Borgens
and Andy Rhodes THC Staff

Each October, Texas Archeology Month (TAM) celebrates the spirit of discovery. Texas Historical Commission (THC) archeologists work with communities across the state to heighten awareness of cultural heritage and discuss compelling elements of the past.

In the process, archeologists have found that shipwrecks are among the most captivating aspects of discovery. In Texas, the wreck of *La Belle*, the ship of 17th-century French explorer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, has fascinated people across the world since THC archeologists discovered it nearly 20 years ago in Matagorda Bay.

However, many of those intrigued by shipwrecks are unfamiliar with another significant maritime discovery, also assisted by the THC's Marine Archeology Program.

In April 2012, scientists made an extraordinary find in the Gulf of Mexico. During a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) investigation of offshore deepwater marine and cultural resources, a crew from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) *Okeanos Explorer* examined an unidentified sonar target at a depth of 4,300 feet (initially discovered during a Shell Oil Company survey in 2011). The investigation verified not only that the target was a shipwreck approximately 85 feet in length, but also that it was armed with cannons and carried a collection of firearms.

The wreck, referred to as Monterrey Shipwreck A, was well preserved, and its

ghostlike remains contained materials that would have been used by its crew and potentially carried as cargo. The remote location of this wreck, more than 200 miles from the nearest shore at Galveston—far away from a timely rescue—suggests the fate of the crew was dire.



Above and opposite: Items discovered during the Monterrey shipwrecks investigations in the Gulf of Mexico. Photos courtesy MCWE and OET.

"The ship slipped, lost and forgotten, from the pages of history as it settled to the seafloor nearly a mile below," says Jack Irion, a marine archeology supervisor with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

Excitement about this discovery, which was live-streamed online as part of the *Okeanos Explorer*'s broadcast capabilities, was the genesis of a second expedition. A collaborative team returned to the site in July 2013 to

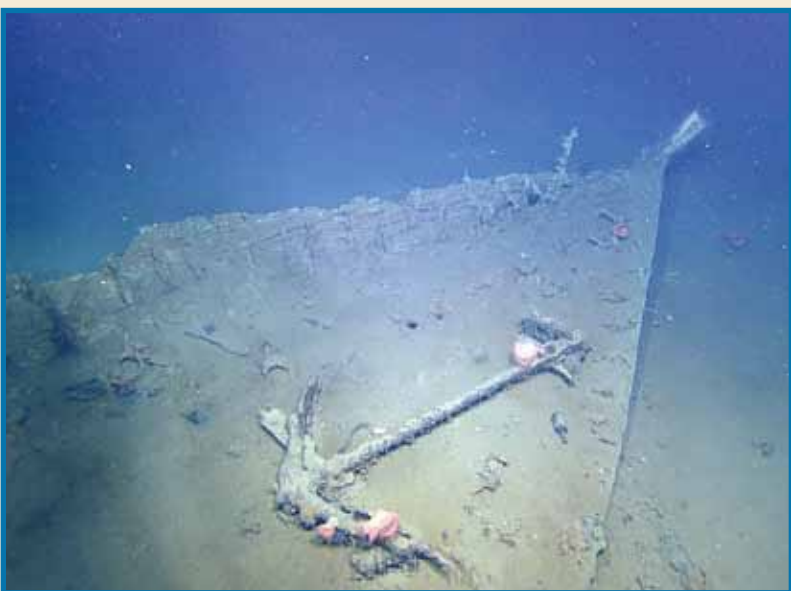
collect a small sample of artifacts to aid in identifying the vessel and its purpose. The team included archeologists from the THC, Texas State University's Meadows Center for Water and the Environment (MCWE), NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the Bureau of

Ocean Energy Management, and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

This work was privately funded and conducted under a federal antiquities permit aboard the Ocean Exploration Trust (OET) research vessel *Nautilus*. Like the *Okeanos Explorer* expedition that preceded it, audiences around the world watched events unfold live online as archeologists worked with the ROV pilots to collect these fragile objects. *Nautilus*' telepresence capabilities enabled Internet users to observe fieldwork activities and communicate with the team by sending comments and inquiries that were sometimes addressed on the air.

"The ability to interact with and observe underwater excavations as a non-participant is unique, especially at these extreme water depths," says Pat Mercado-Allinger, director of the THC's Archeology Division.

The investigation recovered more than 60 artifacts, collected detailed videos and photos, produced an intricate photomosaic site map and centimeter-accurate three-dimensional contour map, and introduced



The recovered artifacts offer a glimpse into the lives of these doomed mariners and are comprised of dinnerware, ceramic storage containers, navigational tools such as telescopes and a sand clock, intact medicinal bottles (including two believed to contain ginger), and assorted firearms. Among

experiments near the site to study biological processes impacting the wreck. As the fieldwork neared conclusion, the team investigated two nearby sonar targets. To the surprise and delight of those participating on the project and watching online, they also proved to be shipwrecks.

“Observers around the world were able to share in these amazing discoveries, as recognition of these unidentified targets as shipwrecks was live-broadcast,” Mercado-Allinger explains.

Monterrey Shipwreck B, the smallest of the three vessels at approximately 65 feet long, was carrying animal hides among its cargo when it sank. The purpose of the third vessel, Monterrey Shipwreck C, is unclear, as it is unarmed and whatever cargo it may once have carried no longer survives. This wreck is the largest and most visibly damaged of the three. The nearly 100-foot long vessel is believed to have been a three-masted ship. All three wrecks are within three to five miles of one another and contain similar artifacts, leading to the belief that these were lost in a single tragic event, such as a catastrophic storm, likely resulting in the loss of all life on board.

the personal objects are a shoe sole, spoon, and a double-sided toothbrush.

The material generally dates from the last quarter of the 18th century to the first quarter of the 19th century, a volatile time in Gulf of Mexico history. This period was punctuated by the War of 1812’s events at the Battle of New Orleans, the collapse of the Spanish empire during the Napoleonic Wars, and the emergence of newly independent nations as Mexico and Latin American countries sought independence from the Spanish monarchy.

Pirates and privateers frequently worked in concert with these groups, sometimes seeking personal gain but often also aiding these causes as de facto navies. It was during these years, and into the 1820s, that privateering activities in the gulf were at their peak.

Current research suggests the wrecks may represent a privateer and two prizes, or perhaps a convoy, that were in transit when tragically lost. If this can conclusively be confirmed by additional research and sampling at the sites, these three wrecks may be among the few examples of such a collective archeological site of this type in the world. ★

BRINGING THE BELLE TO THE BULLOCK

A groundbreaking exhibit, “*La Belle: The Ship That Changed History*,” opens October 25 at the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin.

The exhibit will allow museum visitors to view the transformation of a nearly 600-piece, three-dimensional “jigsaw puzzle” of historic timbers into a recognizable ship. Other exhibit highlights include newly edited film footage, rare artifacts, touch pad games, and interviews with conservators.

In July, the *Belle*’s 17th-century timbers—including the 800-pound keel, 1,100-pound keelson, and mast—were carefully delivered to the Bullock Museum in preparation for the exhibit. THC archeologists discovered the 1686 shipwreck in Matagorda Bay nearly 20 years ago, beginning an extraordinary recovery and conservation process culminating with the exhibit, which will become a prominent, permanent centerpiece of the museum.

“This is one of the most important shipwrecks ever discovered in North America, so we’re very excited to finally have it available for the public to learn more about how this event shaped Texas history,” Mercado-Allinger says. “It’s a wonderful representation of our mission at the THC, especially during Texas Archeology Month, when we encourage Texans to discover the wonders of our state’s fascinating heritage.” ★



Nestled in an alley behind Clifton's historic Main Street (Avenue D) is a small concrete building that once served as an overflow jail. Not long ago, it was downright dingy, with junk scattered throughout its two cells, paint peeling off the metal bars, and a not-so-charming musty smell.

Local resident Kaye Johnson saw an opportunity.

"I was always intrigued by this cool little building—every time I passed by, I had the same thought: There's got to be something interesting I can do with this," she says. "Finally, it hit me. I could turn it into a boutique hotel. The more I started thinking about the possibilities, the more I started embracing this fun challenge."

Johnson set to work contacting local preservationists, civic officials, and Clifton's Main Street program about her unique adaptive reuse project. She researched relevant information and developed a proposal outlining the potential economic and cultural benefits. She also strived to involve community members, from designers to contractors to marketers.

For the most part, everything went smoothly. Johnson's main advice for other entrepreneurs considering historical renovation projects is to be flexible. She believes unexpected

challenges should be viewed as part of the adventure, rather than a setback.

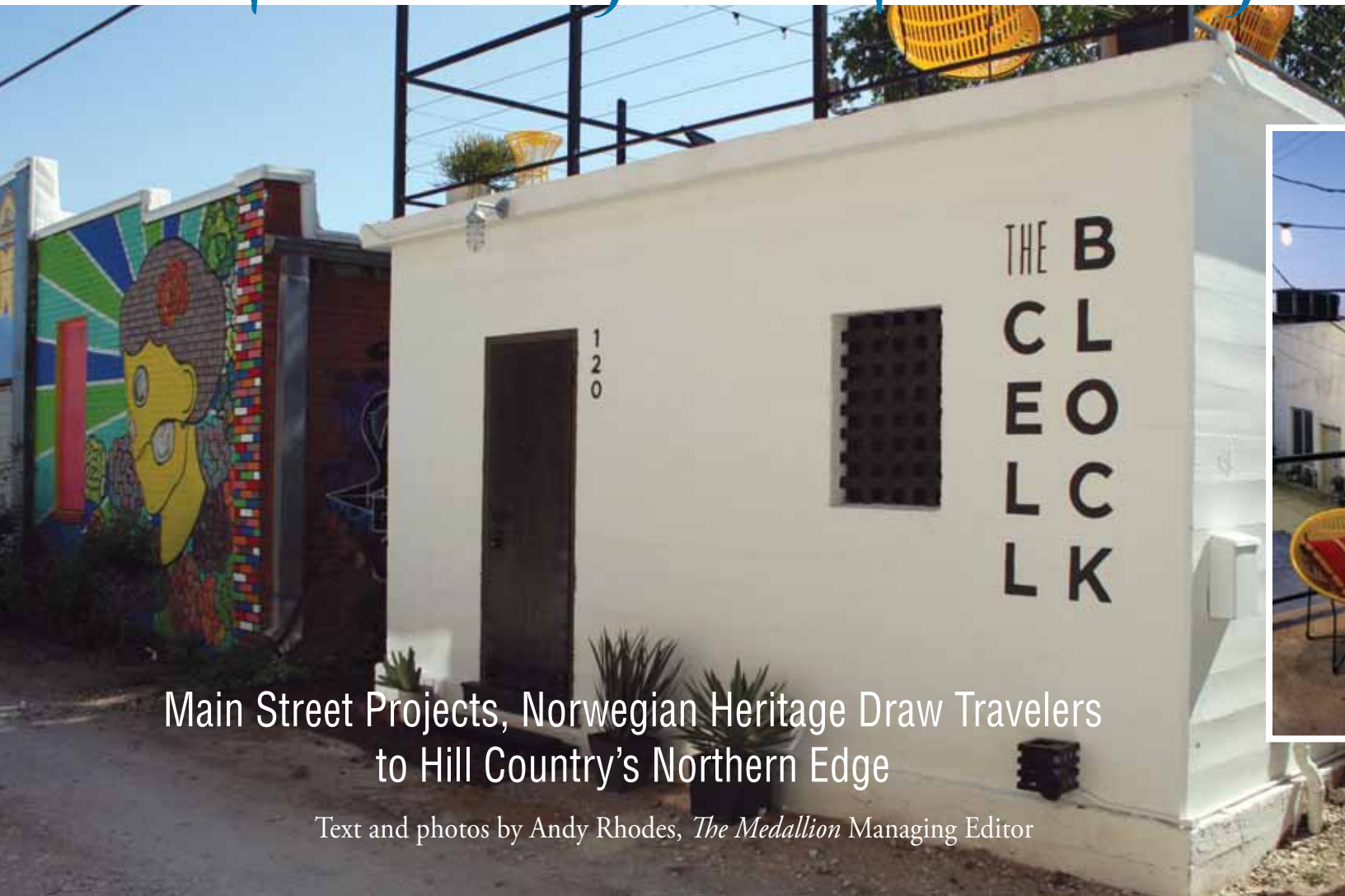
"What really kept me motivated was thinking of it as fighting the good fight to preserve local history," says Johnson, an attorney. "Anything old can be saved—once a building is gone, you can never get that history back. If you have a positive attitude about helping your community, you'll find that can carry you quite far."

The results of her efforts are undeniably worthwhile. **The Cell Block** (254.227.5656, www.stayatthecellblock.com), as it's now called, is a lodging facility unmatched in the U.S. The formerly drab building boasts stark white paint with crisp black detailing. Modern and clever flourishes abound, from quality bedding and stylish furniture, to a retro-styled phonograph with jail-themed records, to a Cell Block-branded notepad, wine label, and Clifton map. A rooftop patio with lounge chairs and a gas fire pit offers a quiet and comfortable respite. Johnson's daughter Melissa, who operates the home-accessory store Far Fetched on Avenue D, provided the interior design work.

Johnson explains that the building, which dates to the early 1930s, never had enough prisoners to use as an



Bosque County's Unique History



Main Street Projects, Norwegian Heritage Draw Travelers to Hill Country's Northern Edge

Text and photos by Andy Rhodes, *The Medallion* Managing Editor

overflow jail; instead, it became an occasional “drunk tank” for the next four decades.

“Several people spent the night here after having a few too many,” Johnson says. “The police would just take their keys, put them in a cell for the night, and tell ‘em to sleep it off.”

Decades later, Cell Block guests are paying for this privilege. They might also be using a complimentary pass from one of the many marketing deals Johnson has developed with other area businesses. She stresses the importance of local partnerships, allowing companies in the area to cross-promote services in a gift package, including free passes to a historic movie theater, wine from a local vineyard, and dinner at a Main Street restaurant.

Clifton Main Street Manager Ashley Abel supports Johnson’s entrepreneurial spirit, adding that the Cell Block is a prime example of a local business doing things the right way.

“They’re a wonderful model of an authentic and unique place in Clifton—they truly deliver on the historic Texas experience,” she says.

Abel adds that the Main Street program has played a significant role in the district’s expansion and success. She also credits the area’s distinctive cultural heritage (primarily Norwegian and German ancestry) and their traditional values as “hard-working people who set goals and focus on achieving them.” In addition, a committed blend of locals and newcomers have worked together to draw retirees and visitors from throughout the region, primarily Dallas-Fort Worth, Waco, and Austin.

“Having the entire community involved is key. Once you get a few projects accomplished, others happen more easily—it’s like dominoes falling,” says Emily Lutz, executive director of the Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) Texas Brazos Trail Region. “The Main Street program plays a major role. We’ve seen what happens in other communities when a city drops out—there’s much less activity and investment in downtown.”

Abel explains that the Main Street program’s first major project was **Heritage Plaza**, a welcoming park at the entrance to historic

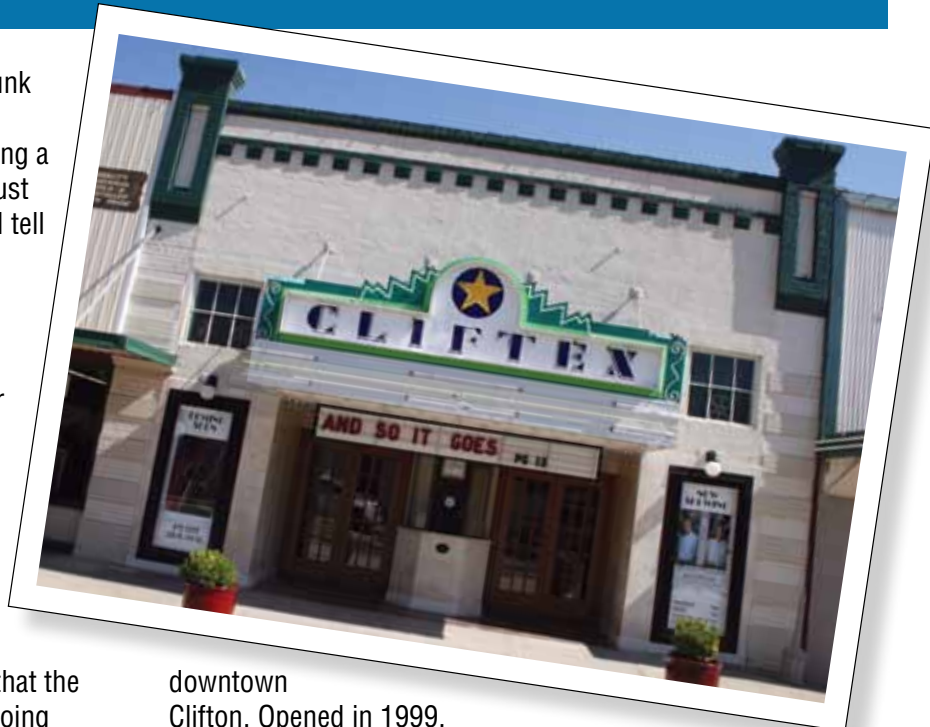
downtown

Clifton. Opened in 1999, the plaza’s centerpiece is “On the Banks of the Bosque,” a life-size bronze statue of a settler on a horse by national cowboy artist Bruce Greene.

Just down the street is one of the city’s historical claims to fame: the 1916 **Cliftex Theatre** (254.675.1229, www.cliftextheatre.com). Billing itself as Texas’ oldest continually operating movie theater, the Cliftex was restored in 2008 and still shows current movies.

“We finally switched from an old 35-millimeter reel projector to digital, but we still have an intermission just to keep the old-time feel,” says theater co-owner Phyllis Gamble. “We tried to save as many cool historical factors as possible. We kept a few rows of the original 16-inch-wide seats in the front rows—the kids just love them.”

Around the corner is Avenue D, an inviting one-block hub of historic Main Street buildings. Heritage travelers enjoy browsing the antique shops, dropping by the visitors center (look for the Norwegian flag in front), having a drink at the historic soda fountain of **Somethin’s Brewing** (254.675.7798, www.somethinsbrewing.com).



At left and above: Clifton’s Cell Block hotel.



Top: The 1916 Cliftex Theatre. Above: Clifton’s historic Main Street district.



The Bosque Museum's research library contains European books about history and royalty dating to the 15th century.

NORWEGIAN KNOWLEDGE

Just around the corner from the Bosque Arts Center is the impressive **Bosque Museum** (254.675.3845, www.bosquemuseum.org). For those intrigued by Bosque County's distinction as the Norwegian Capital of Texas, this is an excellent place to embark on a historical journey.

The Norse story begins with the 1854 arrival of Cleng Peerson, known as the "Norwegian Pathfinder to America." At Peerson's urging, a sizable group of Norwegian immigrants in East Texas relocated to newly formed Bosque County. Norwegians viewed the picturesque and geographically diverse area—featuring dramatic cliffs and small canyons formed by the Bosque River—as "somewhat similar" to parts of their homeland.

"I was somewhat skeptical," says Dr. George Larson, director of the museum. "Then I went to Norway and found that there are indeed some isolated areas of the country that look like you're right in the middle of Bosque County."

Larson adds that the museum receives approximately 10 Norwegian visitors per month, who enjoy perusing the exhibits from what is considered the largest collection of Norwegian artifacts in the South and Southwest. Many of these visitors, including Norway's King Olaf V in 1982, come for the collection's most famous artifact: a rocking chair hand made by Peerson. Additional exhibits contain jewelry, folk art, instruments, photographs, and household items such as an intricately painted wooden trunk.

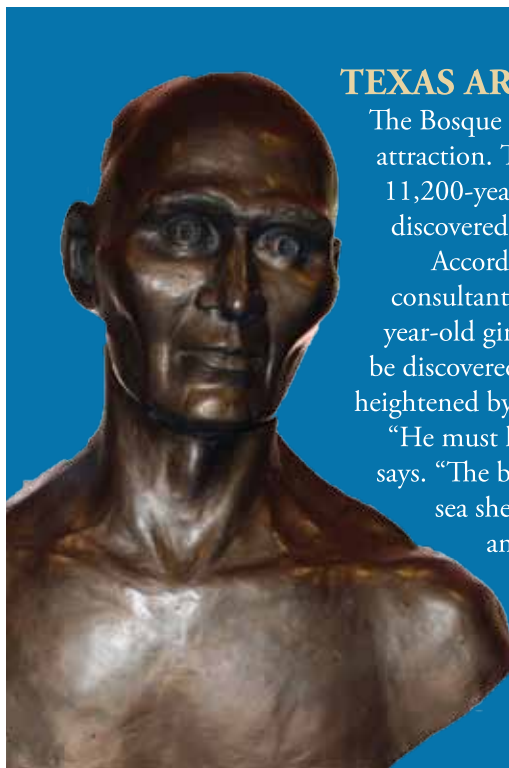
Across the street is the museum's Cleng Peerson Research Library, containing a magnificent collection of historic European books and thousands of photos and research materials from Bosque County. Much of the

somethinsbrewing.com), or staying the night at the **Screen Door Inn** (254.675.7829, www.screendoorinn.com), which occupies seven rooms in the century-old Brooks Building.

Those seeking fine dining can visit **Mitchell's Grille** (254.675.8888, www.mitchellsgrille.com), another of Johnson's impressive adaptive reuse projects. Located in a former 1922 Sinclair gas station building, the restaurant (open Thurs.–Sat. evenings) features upscale food from local chef Roger Mitchell.

Johnson is also responsible for Clifton's most colorful downtown attraction: **Art Alley**. Bold murals with regional affiliations invite visitors to stroll down the alleyway, just west of Avenue D. Johnson took a similar approach to developing the project as she did with the Cell Block (located on the alley) by working with local government leaders and the Clifton Arts Association.

Creativity is also at the core of the **Bosque Arts Center** (254.675.3724, www.bosqueartscenter.org). Housed in the remarkable 1923 administration building of the former Clifton Lutheran College, the arts center is a hub for all things artistic, including a significant collection of Western art displayed on the second floor, a live theater, and community classes (pottery, photography, cooking, music, etc.).



TEXAS ARCHEOLOGY MONTH FIND

The Bosque Museum in Clifton boasts a truly uncommon attraction. The Horn Shelter Man exhibit documents the 11,200-year-old skeletal remains of two individuals discovered in a nearby Brazos River rock shelter in 1920.

According to LaVerne Dutton, the museum's archeological consultant, the remains were of a 44-year-old man and a 12-year-old girl. It's one of only a few burial sites of its kind to be discovered in North America, and its significance is heightened by the accompaniment of remarkable burial items.

"He must have been an important elder or healer," Dutton says. "The burial goods are especially interesting. There were sea shells from the Gulf Coast, hawk and badger claws, and five tortoise shells."

The original artifacts are being studied by Smithsonian Institution anthropologist Dr. Doug Owsley, who made a special presentation at the Bosque Museum on October 16.

collection, like the artifacts in the museum, originated with Norwegian immigrant Jacob Olson, “a man of unusual foresight” who collected items in the late 1800s that he hoped future generations would value.

According to local historian Dr. Shirley Dahl, nearly 3,000 books were discovered from Olson’s collection, including volumes in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, German, and Hebrew. Of particular note are several 1680s history books, mid-1700s books about European kings, and a Norwegian copy of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

“One of our most interesting realizations was that the people who came to Bosque County were very enlightened,” Dahl says. “They were farmers, but they were also reading books and dedicated to pursuing knowledge.”

Most of the Norwegian immigrants settled west of Clifton in an area now known as the Norse Historic District. Although many of the homes are no longer standing, a few historic churches remain as remarkable architectural testaments to the Norwegians’ heritage.

Standing on a picturesque stretch of Hill Country landscape is the **Rock Church** (254.597.2453), originally known as St. Olaf’s Kirke. This inspiring house of worship was constructed in 1886 of native stone, and it retains most of its original furnishings. The absence of electricity and water adds to the Lutheran church’s historical charm, allowing visitors (the door is always unlocked) to feel a true sense of local life in the late 1800s. The Old European-style timber altar and pews, throwback pump organ and wood-burning stove, and simple yet elegant stained glass windows transport travelers to a bygone era in Texas history.

Just down the road, the 1869 **Our Savior’s Lutheran Church** (254.675.3962) serves as the Norse community’s original centerpiece. The beautiful red-brick building still hosts services and an active congregation, and its adjacent cemetery attracts Norwegian genealogists and history buffs. The cemetery contains the grave of Cleng Peerson, and a marker at the site commemorates King Olav V’s 1982 visit honoring the 200th anniversary of Peerson’s birth.

In nearby Meridian, Norwegian history is chronicled at the **Bosque County Collection** (254.435.6182, www.bosquechc.org), which houses the Bosque County Historical Commission’s (CHC) archives in the restored 1884 Lumpkin Building. Chairman Allen Johannes, a former Lutheran pastor and longtime Meridian resident, recalls the stories

he’d initially heard about the Norwegians’ arrival in Bosque County.

“Supposedly, when they knelt down to pray, it felt like they were at home because of all the rocks in the ground,” he says with a smile.

The impressive Bosque Collection is largely the result of former CHC member Elizabeth Torrance, a 2009 recipient of the THC’s Ruth Lester Lifetime Achievement Award. The archives contain oral histories, historical marker documents, genealogical files, historic newspapers, and civic records for anyone interested in researching Norwegian or local history.

Across the street is the city’s proud centerpiece, the 1886 **Bosque County Courthouse** (254.435.2334). The stately three-story limestone building, designed in high Victorian Gothic Revival style with an Italianate clock tower and corner turrets, was restored through the THC’s Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program in 2007.



Top: Norway’s King Olav V visited Our Savior’s cemetery in 1982. Above: the Bosque County Courthouse clock tower was restored by the THC in 2007.

Johannes and County Judge Dewey Ratliff recall the festive scene nearly a decade ago when the courthouse’s new turrets were being installed.

“It was quite a day—it felt like the circus had come to town,” Johannes says.

Ratliff adds, “So many people gathered to watch, we had to place grandstands around the building. People here are very, very proud of this courthouse and its history.”

For information about other heritage tourism destinations in Bosque County, download a free copy of the THC’s *Texas Brazos Trail Region* travel guide at www.texasimetravel.com. ★

The End of a Road

THC's Bankhead Team Wraps Up Documentation of Historic Highway

Leslie Wolfenden

THC Historic Resources Survey Coordinator

After surveying and documenting more than 850 miles of highway, conducting countless hours of archival research, snapping more than 10,000 digital photos, and writing multiple reports, the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Bankhead Highway resource team is nearing the end of the road.

During the course of the two-year project, team members discovered myriad interesting facts, resources, and phenomena now available at www.thc.state.tx.us/bankhead and the THC's Historic Sites Atlas (<http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us>). The transcontinental roadway, which stretched across the state from Texarkana to El Paso, is lined with remarkable 1920s-'60s motels, restaurants, and gas stations built for automobile travelers.

Of particular intrigue are the team's numerous findings categorized as sidebar interests—hidden gems found during the research process that add previously unknown stories and details to the colorful heritage of the "Broadway of America." These sidebar interests are listed on the Historic Texas Highways and Bankhead Highway web pages.

According to Bratten Thomason, director of the THC's History Programs Division, an example of a sidebar interest is the Green Book, a travel guidebook for African Americans published between 1936 and 1966 during segregation.

"Unfortunately during that time, many African Americans were not welcome in a lot of the Bankhead's traveler-oriented businesses, so these guidebooks listed what amenities were available in specific towns along the way," Thomason says.

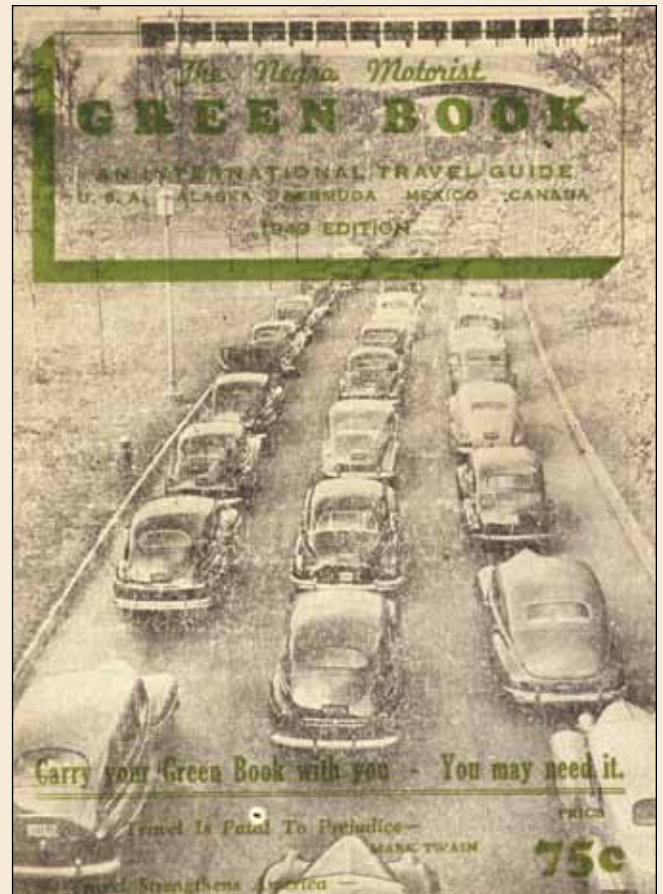
These amenities included hotels, restaurants, barber shops, drug stores, gas stations, liquor stores, and night clubs. Although very few of these locations remain today, the THC's Bankhead resource team discovered one: The A. Winston Tourist Home in El Paso, now known as El Torito Grocery, was the only Green Book resource found along the historic highway.

Another documented sidebar interest was an all-metal gas station discovered during a Bankhead road trip. After conducting follow-up research, team members learned it was a Union Metal catalog gas station.

"Union Metal is better known for making street lamps," Thomason explains. "But our staff found an old catalog that featured this specific gas station design."

Resource team members are currently faced with several questions at this point in the process. What do they do with all the accumulated data? How do they make it available to consultants, researchers, and the general public? And how do they get heritage tourists motivated to experience the Bankhead Highway for themselves?

Texas travelers can use the THC website to plan ahead for which sections of the Bankhead they may wish to drive (or have their co-pilot navigate) to see



The Green Book, a travel guide for African Americans published between 1936 and 1966, provided suggested destinations along the Bankhead Highway.

the extant road-related resources. Additionally, travelers can click on the map's "Google Man" icon to access a street view. The red-pinned items are for National Register listed, National Register eligible, Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, State Antiquities Landmarks, and "contributing-to-a-district" resources. Clicking on a red pin will show a pop-up window with a short description and thumbnail image; the description links directly to an entry with more information and a larger image.

In addition, the THC published a full-color Bankhead Highway brochure



Left: A 1915 map shows historic highways, including the Bankhead (top, in blue) and Meridian.

THC staff also created a short video with vintage music and archival photographs, demonstrating how brick roadways were constructed in the first half of the 20th century. Posted on the Bankhead web page, this video shows a wide variety of vehicles and equipment, ranging from horse-drawn sleds to steamrollers to tar heaters.



Right: El Torito Grocery, El Paso

to be displayed at Texas Travel Information Centers and entities along the Bankhead, such as convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, museums, and libraries. The brochure, designed by the agency's Public Information and Education Department, is available by request (call 512.463.6255 or visit the THC's website).

In the coming months, resource team members will create lesson plans and other media options using the tremendous amount of data

gathered during the Bankhead project. The THC has hired a youth education specialist, Lisa Worley, to develop new ways to use THC programs to inspire, educate, and inform young Texans about the importance of preserving their state's historic resources.

The Bankhead Highway project—part of a team effort with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and cultural resources management firm Hardy-Heck-Moore, Inc.—was sponsored and administered through the THC's Historic Texas Highways Program. Special funding was allocated by the Texas Legislature and a TxDOT grant, courtesy of federal Transportation Enhancement funds.

Even as the Bankhead Highway research materials are being filed away, THC staff kicked off the second Historic Texas Highways project: documenting the international Meridian Highway. This historic roadway ran roughly along present-day U.S. Hwy. 81 and I-35 from the Wichita Falls area to Laredo, with an offshoot from Waco to Galveston. Resource team members will use the same equipment and techniques as they did with the Bankhead project, while incorporating some lessons learned during the process. "With both of these projects, we're hoping our efforts to provide research,

images, and traveling materials to the public will help heritage tourists have many happy hours exploring our historic Texas highways," Thomason says. ★

Be a Friend

How Would You Like to Make an Impact?

By Sunny Howard

Friends of the THC Development Coordinator

Do you want to help preserve Texas history? Maybe support educational programs? The Friends of the Texas Historical Commission (Friends) makes it easy! As the THC launches new and ambitious statewide education programs, builds new visitors centers at its historic sites, and uncovers treasures off the Texas coast, you can be a part of making it all happen. There are several ways you can donate to the Friends.



SHOP FOR FRIENDS

The Friends group has partnered with various organizations and businesses to make it easy for you to support preservation in Texas. By participating in Shop for Friends you can choose from several different options—from buying groceries to ordering a book to shopping

for a birthday present. By using Amazon, iGive, or Vacations for a Cause, you can make an impact just by shopping, since a small portion of your purchase price is donated to the Friends. To learn more, visit www.thcfriends.org/shop-friends.

TEXAS HEROES

In keeping with the spirit of the Old West hero, the Friends formed a special group of philanthropists, the Texas Heroes, who provide financial support to help preserve the rich and colorful history of our state, educate Texans about our shared heritage, and celebrate the real people helping real places tell the real stories of Texas. Make a gift by completing the form at right or visit www.thcfriends.org.



ATTEND AN EVENT OR DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR WORKSHOP

The Friends hosts regional events, book signings, and behind-the-scenes tours of some of the THC's most exciting places. The organization also teaches fundraising and grant writing twice a year for citizens seeking funding for special projects in their communities.

With so many ways to support the THC, it is hard to pick just one—so don't. Feel free to choose two or three! Visit the Friends webpage to get the latest updates on events, special projects, and goals. ★

YES! I want to preserve the real places telling the real stories of Texas!

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legend \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Ranger \$2,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empresario \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pioneer \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wrangler \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scout \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____ |

Name: _____

Please indicate how you prefer to be recognized.

☐ I wish to remain anonymous

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ Please contact me about including the Friends of the THC in my will or trust.

☐ Check enclosed.

Please make checks payable to the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission.

☐ Charge my credit card.

Amount: _____ ☐ V ☐ MC ☐ AMX ☐ Disc

Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

My gift is in:

☐ Honor of:

☐ Memory of:

Please acknowledge this gift to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Gifts to the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, please visit www.thcfriends.org.

Welcome Additions

Fort Griffin Celebrates Opening of New Visitors Center, Site Improvements

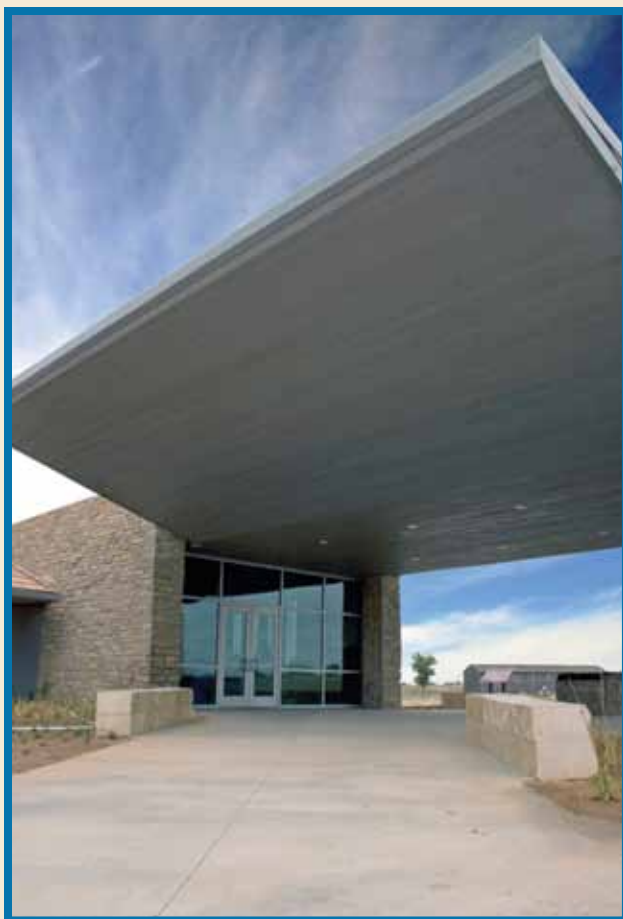
*By Glenn Reed and Hal Simon
THC Historic Sites Division Staff*

The town of Fort Griffin didn't always take kindly to strangers in the 1870s. Considered one of the West's wildest towns, its streets were teeming with outlaws, gamblers, and buffalo hunters. Although it catered to soldiers at the nearby fort, the settlement was never associated with welcoming visitation.

Fast-forward nearly 150 years, and the big news around town is the opening of a hospitable and vastly improved visitors center at Fort Griffin State Historic Site, one of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) 20 historic properties. The THC recently renovated the site's 45-year-old facility to provide an impressive new exhibit gallery, enhanced staff offices and storage, new public restrooms, and a meeting room for community groups.

Inside the new exhibit gallery, a video timeline introduces visitors to the long history of the site, from Plains Indian life through the fort's military occupation (circa 1867–81) to the arrival of railroads. The new exhibits provide expanded information about the fort's establishment, various military units and their duties, and the economic impact of buffalo hunting, wagon freight, and cattle drives in the region. Special emphasis is given to the daily lives of the individuals who lived at the fort and in the area, including Native Americans, Buffalo Soldiers, and civilian families.

Cotera+Reed Architects of Austin designed the new visitors center buildings, including a 1,600 square-foot outdoor interpretive plaza, where



The new visitors center at Fort Griffin features an exhibit gallery, offices, and public meeting room.

visitors can gather in the shade and view a new bronze diorama depicting the historic layout of the fort along with a 1936 Texas Centennial Monument. The new buildings are simple in form and are clad in locally quarried stone similar to the materials used in the construction of the historic fort buildings. New landscaping around the complex includes native grasses and low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plant species.

In addition to the visitors center improvements, the THC recently completed preservation work on the

historic bakery, cistern, and well that are original to the fort and were critical to its operation. The 1873 bakery includes two bread ovens that once produced 800 loaves of bread daily to serve the more than 450 men of the 10th Cavalry and 11th Infantry divisions stationed at the fort. The preservation work included masonry repairs, structural stabilization of ovens and exterior walls, repairs to the stone floor, and restoration of wooden windows and doors.

The stone cistern, associated with the post's hospital building, has been stabilized to correct ongoing structural distress. This 8-by-8-foot, stucco-lined structure extends 14 feet into the ground and has a capacity of more than 6,000 gallons of water.

The well, located just off the parade ground, is the first historic structure visitors encounter when they enter the site, and it emphasizes the vital importance of fresh water to

the operation of the fort. Fifteen feet in diameter and extending 45 feet into the ground, it was capable of providing water to the soldiers while allowing the fort to occupy an elevated position on the landscape. ★

FORT GRIFFIN STATE HISTORIC SITE

1701 N. U.S. Hwy. 283

Albany, TX 76430

325.762.3592

www.visitfortgriffin.com

THC Honors Director of Presidio La Bahia With Prestigious Award

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recently recognized longtime Presidio La Bahia Director Newton Warzecha with the John L. Nau, III Award of Excellence in Museums. Warzecha, who passed away on August 30 after battling with cancer, was honored for his many contributions to preserving, promoting, and securing funding for the historic fort constructed by the Spanish Army.

Presidio La Bahia is perhaps best known as the site of the Goliad Massacre, where after the fall of the Alamo, a group of Texans under the command of Col. James Fannin surrendered to Mexican troops and were later executed as they were marched from the fort.

During more than 22 years as director of the site, Warzecha exhibited exceptional leadership in developing professional collections management policies for the facility's significant collection of Texas artifacts, dating from the Spanish Colonial through the Republic of Texas periods. In addition to overseeing extensive exhibit improvements at the site, he facilitated its designation as a State Antiquities Landmark, ensuring greater protection for the buildings, grounds, and collections.

The award recognizes an individual in the museum field for significant achievement in the areas of historical interpretation, museum education, and conservation of collections and/or community involvement. Named for former THC Chairman John L. Nau, III, the award includes a monetary stipend for the honoree's museum.

For more information about Presidio La Bahia, visit www.presidio labahia.org. For more information about THC awards, visit www.thc.state.tx.us or contact the agency's History Programs Division at 512.463.5853. ★



Presidio La Bahia Director Newton Warzecha accepts the John L. Nau, III Award of Excellence in Museums.

TEXAS HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE COMMISSION OFFERS GRANT FUNDING

The Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission (THGC) provides funding for organizations and projects that assist the THGC's mission to support Holocaust and genocide courses of study and awareness programs. Funding is available for a variety of programs, including classroom education, workshops, oral history recordings, and memorials and exhibits. Grants are available to permanent nonprofit institutions located in Texas.

Grant requests may be made in any amount up to \$10,000, and require a 50 percent cash match. In-kind services may not be counted toward the match. Applications for the 2015 grant cycle will be accepted through November 30, 2014.

For more information, contact the THGC coordinator at 512.463.8815 or visit www.thgc.texas.gov. ★

APPLICATIONS FOR 2015 HISTORICAL MARKERS BEING ACCEPTED

The THC is currently accepting applications for subject historical markers, designated Historic Texas Cemeteries (HTC), and Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs). Applications must be submitted to the appropriate County Historical Commission (CHC), and the deadline for CHCs to forward applications to the THC is November 15, via email, to markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.

RTHLs are properties judged to be historically and architecturally significant, and must be at least 50 years old. The THC will approve up to 180 new applications; up to 20 additional markers will be approved through the Undertold Stories marker program.

Complete information regarding the marker applications process can be found at www.thc.state.tx.us. To learn more about Official Texas Historical Markers, RTHLs, and HTC designations, contact the THC's History Programs Division at 512.463.5853 or visit www.thc.state.tx.us. ★

Constructive Conversations

Initiating Discussions that Educate and Influence

By CHC Outreach Program Staff

County Historical Commissions (CHC) contribute thousands of hours each month to promote preservation and the history of our state. This job requires CHC appointees to have positive attitudes and develop constructive relationships.

However, leaving a good impression on partners and potential partners is only half the battle. Promoting your work often requires difficult conversations, which may be uncomfortable for volunteers who are typically very agreeable people.

“It’s important to remember that respectfully disagreeing with someone about a situation doesn’t make you a disagreeable person,” says Amy Hammons, CHC Outreach Program coordinator. “In fact, sharing a differing opinion may be the best way to educate others and make a case for preservation.”

Hammons adds that CHC members should consider the following critical conversations that help save Texas’ history and historic resources:

- Correcting assumptions made about historical events



The El Paso CHC partners with a wide range of heritage sites, tourism organizations, and educational institutions to develop outreach initiatives for elected officials and citizens.

- Convincing a property owner, local official, or community to rehabilitate a historic structure rather than demolish it
- Asking for funding and in-kind services to support the CHC’s work.

These discussions are part of the job for a CHC, which is charged with preserving and protecting the historic and cultural resources of its county.

“When initiated in a pleasant and helpful manner, these conversations cultivate an audience that participates in CHC activities,” Hammons says.

“Conversations initiated with complaints and criticisms tend to be uncomfortable for everyone involved, so consider reframing your issue. Think in terms of what your audience needs and wants to know.”

For example, Hammons advises CHCs to consider the needs and wants of county officials, who are interested in work that benefits the county overall and may have particular interests or objectives to accomplish during their tenure. Also, determine the county officials’

ties to county history and how the CHC’s efforts can benefit the county as a whole.

“Frame your argument in terms of how CHC allocations and energy will benefit others—come to the table with documented data, options, and recommendations to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the situation,” Hammons says. “And, remember to smile! Smiling puts people at ease and softens the tone of your conversation and the manner in which you deliver your message.” ★

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Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state’s historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories

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WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

Know your Texas history? Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email to medallion@thc.state.tx.us.

Need a clue? In honor of Texas Archeology Month, identify the location of this rock art in the Texas Mountain Trail Region.



Answer to the photo from the last issue: The site pictured at left is the Sugarloaf Mountain Bridge on CR 264 in Milam County. Many readers correctly identified the bridge, but congratulations (and prizes) go to the first three to respond: Mary Bradley of Wylie, Jack Brooks of Taylor, and Dolores Sonntag of Rockdale. Thanks to all who participated! ★

